



**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
April 18, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm.

**Present:** Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Deirdre Kvale, Mike Feldmann, Jahn Dyvik, and Gina Joyce

**Staff Present:** City Administrator: Scott Weske; City Attorney: John Thames; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

**Absent:** None

**APPROVE AGENDA**

*A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Miner, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: all.*

**OPEN CORRESPONDENCE**

**Bryan Miller, 295 Lakeview Avenue** (Submitted in Writing) - City Clerk Moeller read aloud the following statement submitted by Mr. Miller:

"Honorable Mayor and Members of the Council,

I would like to offer my opinion on some current events.

Since November of last year when you held an open house for all residents involved, Orono residents have begun to question what is going on with the Fire Department - why are we starting our own? What's it going to cost? Is the current system broken? I have not heard one single Council Member nor Mayor for Orono answer one single question. Their response has either been to attack one's questioning of it or to put off an answer until they have more information. At last week's Coffee with the Mayor, Walsh said in one sentence, 'we don't know what the Fire Department is going to cost, we are waiting to get that information in May'. One resident asked, 'then how can you say our taxes won't go up when you don't even have the costs known?', and Mayor Walsh's response was, 'because I have good intuition'. That's an irresponsible and unacceptable response.

In my opinion, you cannot do business with folks who cannot demonstrate good governance. I encourage this Council again to rescind your current counteroffer to the City of Orono. Perhaps if they get their ducks in a row in a year or two, we can revisit. Long Lake will be fine without them no matter what. We're not going to die if they don't partner with us. Because of the lack of transparency Orono officials have demonstrated with their residents, I would at least encourage this Council to seek some kind of contingency to our counteroffer where Orono is obligated to demonstrate that, in fact, the residents of Orono are onboard with this idea of starting their own Fire Department; for if Orono residents are not, that will become a much more tangled web that we are involved in. And that's my opinion and oddly enough .....my good intuition."

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **Closed Session Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, Subd. 3 (b): Discuss Enforcement Action Related to the Fire Services Contract**

*A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Miner, to move the meeting into a Closed Session pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, Subd. 3 (b) to discuss enforcement action related to the fire services contract. Ayes: all.*

*A motion was made by Miner, seconded by Dyvik, to exit the Closed Session. Ayes: all.*

City Attorney Thames concluded that the City Council had just adjourned a Closed Session meeting held pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, Subd. 3 (b) to discuss enforcement action related to the fire services contract. Staff and the attorneys have been given direction.

### **Discussion of Fire Department Equipment**

Council member Dyvik reported that he had met with Fire Chief Heiland who put together a draft of a new CIP that evaluated the Fire Department's current equipment. He recalled that in May of 2021, former Fire Chief Van Eyll had requested a replacement for Utility 11 and Orono said no, and had indicated that they would take it up at a work session which was the last he had seen of anything happening with it. This vehicle has been included on the CIP for several years and he felt the City should move forward with a purchase with or without Orono approving doing so in advance because the City has the money set aside in the CIP budget. He emphasized that he felt the Fire Department had waited long enough for the vehicle replacement and that the Council should take action.

Weske noted that the vehicle replacement had also been requested in June 2022.

Council member Dyvik added that he did not think the City should wait on Orono anymore because he felt confident their answer to the question of purchasing would be 'no'. He pointed out that the current contract allows for Long Lake to purchase 100% of an equipment item if they choose to. He mentioned that there is also an engine included in the CIP to replace Engine 11, and Fire Chief Heiland was aware that Excelsior would be replacing an engine in January. Their former engine may work for the Fire Department, and Long Lake could also go ahead and purchase it without Orono signing on if needed. Buying used equipment and getting a few years out of it is not necessarily a bad way to go and he believes there are funds available for both of the proposed purchases. He also advised that the Fire Department needs some radios and explained that he liked the approach of leasing rather than buying. He reiterated that he would like the City to consider moving forward with these equipment purchases because he felt the Fire Advisory Board has simply been talking about equipment for too long.

Mayor Miner stated that the subject of Fire Department equipment is included on the regular agenda, and the Council will be able to discuss it more fully during the regular City Council meeting following the work session.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was discussed.

**ADJOURN**

*Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 6:28 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske  
City Administrator